

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3357

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0954

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, XF

SUBJ: IRAQI REGIME FRUSTRATED BY COURSE OF EVENTS

1. RUMORS OF KURDISH INSURGENCY IN THE NORTH CONTINUE TO CIRCULATE IN BAGHDAD. FACT THAT SADAM HUSSEIN SPENT FOUR DAYS, JULY 6 TO 9, TRAVELLING IN NORTH IS INDICATION OF GOI CONCERN. SINCE IRAQI REGIME IS CONTINUING ITS STRIDENT CALLS FOR OVERTHROUGH OF SYRIAN REGIME, IT WOULD SEEM PLAUSIBLE THAT SARG IS RETURNING THE COMPLIMENT BY SUPPORTING SUBVERSION BY DISSIDENT KURDS IN NORTHERN IRAQ.

2. WE WOULD ALSO NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY OF LOW KEY IRANIAN SUPPORT FOR KURDISH DISSIDENTS AS A COUNTER TO IRAQI TROOP BUILDUP ON SYRIAN BORDER. ON THE SURFACE, HOWEVER, IRAQI-IRANIAN
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DETENTE STILL APPEARS TO BE ON THE TRACKS, ALTHOUGH IRAQIS ARE

SHARPLY LIMITING THE NUMBER OF IRANIAN PILGRIMS ALLOWED TO ENTER IRAQ.

3. LEBANESE SITUATION REMAINS MAJOR PREOCCUPATION OF IRAQI PRESS. COVERAGE OF SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON IS NEAR-HYSTERICAL AS GOI DOES ITS BEST TO STIR UP INTERNAL PROBLEMS FOR SYRIAN REGIME. FOR EXAMPLE, JULY 12 PAPERS CARRIED STORIES OF SYRIAN ATROCITIES IN LEBANON, MUTINIES IN SEVERAL SYRIAN ARMY UNITS, RESIGNATIONS OF SYRIAN ARMY OFFICERS, BOMB BLASTS IN DAMASCUS, PROTESTS SWEEPING SYRIA, AND WILD CELEBRATIONS IN WESTERN BEIRUT FOLLOWING RUMORS OF A COUP IN DAMASCUS.

4. COMMENT: IRAQI REGIME APPARENTLY EXPRESSING ITS FRUSTRATION OVER CHRISTIAN MILITARY SUCCESSES IN LEBANON AND REFUSAL OF SYRIAN REGIME TO COLLAPSE UNDER PRESSURE OF LEBANESE INVOLVEMENT. IRAQI EFFORTS TO CREATE AN ACTUAL "REJECTION FRONT" WITH LIBYA, ALGERIA, AND THE PALESTINIANS HAVE STALLED AND TROOP MOVEMENT PLOY PROBABLY RUN ITS COURSE AS IRAQI UNITS ON SYRIAN BORDER BAKE IN DESERT SUN. APART FROM STEPPED UP EFFORTS TO SUBVERT SYRIAN REGIME INTERNALLY, WHICH RUNS RISK OF ENCOURAGING CORRESPONDING ACTS BY SYRIANS IN NORTHERN IRAQ, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT IRAQI REGIME COULD DO TO REVERSE THE COURSE OF EVENTS. WE EXPECT IRAQI FRUSTRATIONS WILL CONTINUE TO MOUNT BARRING SOME UNEXPECTED DEVELOPEMENTS.

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